

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SS-15 SSO-00 OPR-02 SY-05 A-01

CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 INRE-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 CU-02

SCA-01 CPR-01 AID-05 L-02 /069 W

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Z R 241010Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 4025

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCOMSUL UDORN

MACTHAI BANGKOK THAI/J/3

DIA

CDR USSAG NKP

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 3680

JAKARTA FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HABIB

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AEMR, PINS, LA

SUBJECT: SECRETARY'S BRIEFING: SAFETY AND SECURITY OF US
MISSION PERSONNEL IN VIENTIANE

REF: HOGANSON TELECON WITH TEARE/RAMSEY, 240730Z MAY 75

1. FOLLOWING IS MISSION RESPONSE TO QUESTION REGARDING
SECURITY OF AMERICANS, POSED REF TELECON, FOR SECRETARY'S
BRIEFING:

2. THE GREATEST PROBLEM IN VIENTIANE AT THIS TIME IS THE
UNWILLINGNESS OF THE PGNU IN PRACTICE, DESPITE NUMEROUS
ORAL ASSURANCES GIVEN US AND DESPITE THE PRIME MINISTER'S
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HAVING ISSUED VARIOUS ORDERS TO THIS EFFECT, TO PROVIDE

ADEQUATE PROTECTION AND PROPER ACCESS TO U.S. DIPLOMATIC PREMISES. WE HAVE DESCRIBED IN NUMEROUS SITREPS THE HANDS-OFF ATTITUDE OF JOINT POLICE AND JOINT MILITARY PROTECTIVE FORCES (WHEN THEY HAVE APPEARED AT ALL) IN THE VARIOUS INCIDENTS AT THE NA HAI DIAO COMPOUND, THE KM-6 RESIDENTIAL AREA, AT OUTLYING USAID FACILITIES, AND AT CHANCERY ITSELF ON MAY 9 AND AGAIN MORNING MAY 24. IT IS CLEAR FROM CHARGE'S CONVERSATIONS WITH SOUVANNA AND PHOUMI, AND FROM REPORTING IN OTHER CHANNELS, THAT SOUVANNA GENUINELY WISHES TO SEE HARASSMENT OF USAID AND THE MISSION GENERALLY BROUGHT TO AN END, AND EQUALLY CLEAR THAT PHOUMI AND LESSER LPF OFFICIALS UNDER HIS COMMAND OR INFLUENCE ARE FAILING TO IMPLEMENT THESE ORDERS IN WHOLE OR IN PART AND ARE SIMULTANEOUSLY KEEP-ING UP THE PRESSURE ON US.

3. ALTHOUGH PHOUMI AND COMPANY ARE, WE BELIEVE, FULLY CAPABLE OF PUTTING AN END TO ALL HARASSMENT OF MISSION, THEY HAVE CHOSEN NOT TO DO SO AND INSTEAD HAVE ALLOWED DEMONSTRATORS TO CONTINUE. THE MAY 23 EXIT CONTROVERSY AT KM-6 WAS RESOLVED ONLY WHEN STUDENTS CAME ON THE SCENE, WHICH GAVE APPEARANCE THAT STUDENTS WERE IN COMMAND. SOTH PHETRASY'S CONVERSATION WITH CHARGE MAY 23 (VIENTIANE 3654) IN WHICH HE ATTEMPTED TO GET US TO "NEGOTIATE" DIRECTLY WITH NA HAI DIAO OCCUPIERS IS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THIS PLOY. COLONEL PHAO BOUNNAPHOL (LPF DELEGATE TO JCCIA) TOLD EMBOFF AT NA HAI DIAO GATE MID-DAY MAY 24 THAT HE HAD COME ONLY TO CHECK ON REPORTS THAT PATHET LAO TROOPS WERE MISBEHAVING THERE; HE TRIED TO PASS OFF PRESENCE OF DEMONSTRATORS INSIDE COMPOUND AS "VOTRE AFFAIRE."

4. THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT SINCE LAST STATE SITREP WAS THE WORK-STOPPAGE BY TAPS GUARDS (AND, IN EFFECT, THE DISSOLUTION OF THE TAPS ORGANIZATION) LATE ON MAY 23. (DETAILS REPORTED IN EMBASSY'S MAY 24 SITREP AND MAY 24 USINFO.) ALTHOUGH SOME MISSION EMPLOYEES HAVE ARRANGED WITH KNOWN AND TO SOME EXTENT TRUSTED TAPS GUARDS TO CONTINUE GUARDING RESIDENCES ON A PERSONAL-CONTRACT BASIS, THE NIGHT OF MAY 24-25 WILL BE THE FIRST CONFIDENTIAL

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NIGHT WITHOUT GENERAL TAPS PROTECTION ON RESIDENCES AND COULD WITNESS SIGNIFICANT PROBLEMS IF ONLY FROM LOCAL HOUSEBREAKERS.

5. FORTUNATELY THERE HAS BEEN NO VIOLENCE AGAINST ANY U.S. PERSONNEL TO DATE; THERE HAVE CERTAINLY BEEN OC-CASIONS WHEN DEMONSTRATORS COULD HAVE DONE BODILY HARM TO AMERICANS HAD THEY CHOSEN, AND AT THE MOMENT ONE

CONTRACTOR EMPLOYEE (DARDEN OF FEDERAL ELECTRIC) REMAINS IN A PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE SITUATION AS HE IS PRISONER IN THE NA HAI DIAO USAID COMPOUND. (HE HAS, HOWEVER, BEEN FURNISHED A WEEK'S SUPPLY OF FOOD IN A WELL-EXECUTED NIGHT-TIME OPERATION.) THE TWO MARINE GUARDS REMAIN ON DUTY IN OTHER BUILDINGS IN THE USAID COMPOUND AS THEY HAVE BEEN SINCE EARLY MORNING HOURS OF MAY 21. THEY ARE SAFE BEHIND STEEL DOORS.

6. IN SHORT, THE QUESTION OF PHYSICAL SECURITY OF AMERICANS IS STILL MORE POTENTIAL THAN REAL, ALTHOUGH IN THE CLIMATE WHICH THE PGNU HAS PERMITTED TO DEVELOP, THE POSSIBILITY OF INCIDENTS INVOLVING VIOLENCE TO AMERICANS REMAINS HIGH. (FYI, THIS IS ONE REASON THAT WE REITERATE WITH URGENCY

THE REQUEST MADE VIENTIANE 3626 FOR MESSAGE AT LEAST FROM SECRETARY TO FONMIN, WITH STRESS ON ISSUES OF INVIOABILITY OF DIPLOMATIC PREMISES; PROVISION OF ADEQUATE AND EFFECTIVE POLICE PROTECTION WHEN REQUIRED; AND STANDARD IMMUNITIES FOR MOVEMENT OF PERSONNEL AND SHIPMENT OF THEIR EFFECTS.)

7. DEPARTURES MAY 24 UNDER ACCELERATED REDUCTION PROGRAM, NUMBER OF AMERICANS REMAINING AFTER THOSE DEPARTURES, AND SUMMARIES OF CHARGE'S MAY 24 CONVERSATIONS WITH PRIMIN AND FONMIN BEING SENT AS SEPTELS OF EQUAL PRECEDENCE. CHAPMAN

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